

Seeking a Sign; Mark 8:11-13

- I. The Right Track
 - A. We all want to know that we are on the right path
 1. Is this the right job?
 2. Am I in the right city?
 3. Is the life path I am on the right one
 - B. We look for divine intervention
 1. "Whoever calls me first for an interview must be the place God wants me to work"
 2. "If the loan is approved, it must be God's will"
 - C. We are seeking some kind of special sign just for us
 - D. But if we look, we will notice that it has been there the whole time
- II. A Sign from Heaven
 - A. Mark 8:11; The Pharisees came and began to argue with him, seeking from him a sign from heaven to test him.
 - B. I think the key to understand our lesson today is seen at the end of this verse
 1. "To test Him"
 2. Our "sign seeking" is often for our own selfish reasons
 3. We have already made up our minds and we want God to validate or approve our decision
 4. We are testing God!
 5. Exodus 17:1–7; 1 All the congregation of the people of Israel moved on from the wilderness of Sin by stages, according to the commandment of the Lord, and camped at Rephidim, but there was no water for the people to drink. 2 Therefore the people quarreled with Moses and said, "Give us water to drink." And Moses said to them, "Why do you quarrel with me? Why do you test the Lord?" 3 But the people thirsted there for water, and the people grumbled against Moses and said, "Why did you bring us up out of Egypt, to kill us and our children and our livestock with thirst?" 4 So Moses cried to the Lord, "What shall I do with this people? They are almost ready to stone me." 5 And the Lord said to Moses, "Pass on before the people, taking with you some of the elders of Israel, and take in your hand the staff with which you struck the Nile, and go. 6 Behold, I will stand before you there on the rock at Horeb, and you shall strike the rock, and water shall come out of it, and the people will drink." And Moses did so, in the sight of the elders of Israel. 7 And he called the name of the place Massah and Meribah, because of the quarreling of the people of Israel, and because they tested the Lord by saying, "Is the Lord among us or not?"
 - C. We selfishly desire that loan or that job, and we seek God's approval after we have already made the decision
 - D. What "sign" are we looking for?
 1. "a marvelous event manifesting a supernatural act of a divine agent; often with an emphasis on communicating a message."
 2. Are looking for some marvelous event, a supernatural act of God to happen that puts a neon arrow above the path we are supposed to be taking, "GO THIS WAY!?"
 - E. Didn't this supernatural act already happen?
 1. The Canonization of the Bible
 2. The Old Testament was already accepted and arranged by the Jewish People
 3. Jesus attests to that

4. Luke 24:44; Then he said to them, "These are my words that I spoke to you while I was still with you, that everything written about me in the Law of Moses and the Prophets and the Psalms must be fulfilled."
5. The process of canonization has to do with what writings are deemed inspired and thus included in the New Testament canon.
6. The word canon originated in reference to a measuring reed or standard by which something is measured.
7. In reference to the Bible a canon has to do with genuinely inspired writings (to be used as a measuring rod or standard for our lives)
8. "The Church was very methodical in reference to the New Testament canon. Several criteria were necessary in order for a writing to be accepted, but we will mention three here. First, the document in question had to conform to the rule of faith, "conformity between the document and orthodoxy, that is, Christian truth recognized as normative in the churches."Second, the document required some sort of apostilicity, "which as a criterion came to include those who were in immediate contact with the apostles."Third, "a document's widespread and continuous acceptance and usage by churches everywhere" was taken into consideration."
Robert Verlarde
9. "There are now more than 5,300 known Greek manuscripts of the New Testament. Add over 10,000 Latin Vulgate and at least 9,300 other early versions (MSS) and we have more than 24,000 manuscript copies of portions of the New Testament. In comparison, the Iliad by Homer is second with only 643 manuscripts that still survive. The first complete preserved text of Homer dates from the 13th century" Josh McDowell
10. Caesar's "Gallic War" (58-50BC) only 9 or 10 the oldest being around 800AD
11. Roman History of Livy (59BC-17AD) only 20 from around 400-500 AD
12. "The History of Thucydides (c. 460-400 B.C.) is known to us from eight MSS, the earliest belonging to about the beginning of the Christian era. The same is true of the History of Herodotus (c. 480-425 B.C.). Yet no classical scholar would listen to an argument that the authenticity of Herodotus or Thucydides is in doubt because the earliest MSS of their works which are of any use are over 1,300 years later than the originals" FF Bruce

F. Here is our sign from heaven!

III. No Sign Will be Given

- A. Mark 8:12; And he sighed deeply in his spirit and said, "Why does this generation seek a sign? Truly, I say to you, no sign will be given to this generation."
- B. To sigh or groan intensely (as a sign of extreme pain, discomfort, or displeasure)
- C. Jesus had already performed many signs, but the Pharisees were spiritually blind
 1. Heals a man from an unclean spirit (Mark 1:21-28)
 2. Heals many (Mark 1:29-34)
 3. Cleanses a leper (Mark 1:40-45)
 4. Heals a paralytic (Mark 2:1-12)
 5. Heals a man with a withered hand (Mark 3:1-6)
 6. Calms a Storm (Mark 4:35-41)
 7. Heals a man from many demons (Mark 5:1-13)
 8. Heals a woman from a disease (Mark 5:25-34)
 9. Raises Jairus' daughter from the dead (Mark 5:35-43)
 10. Feeds five thousand (Mark 6:30-44)
 11. Walks on water (Mark 6:45-52)

12. Heals the sick in Gennesaret (Mark 6:53-56)
 13. Heals a Syrophenician woman's daughter from and unclean spirit (Mark 7:24-30)
 14. Gives a deaf man the ability to hear (Mark 7:31-37)
 15. Feeds four thousand (Mark 8:1-10)
- D. Jesus continues to heal the sick even after He tells the Pharisees that there will be no sign
 - E. In Matthew's account, Jesus says, "except the sign of Jonah"
 1. Matthew 12:39-40; 39 But he answered them, "An evil and adulterous generation seeks for a sign, but no sign will be given to it except the sign of the prophet Jonah. 40 For just as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of the great fish, so will the Son of Man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth.
 2. Jonah 1:17; And the Lord appointed a great fish to swallow up Jonah. And Jonah was in the belly of the fish three days and three nights.
 3. Because the book of Jonah tells of a fish swallowing a man, many have dismissed the book of Jonah as fiction. But 2 Kings 14:25 mentions Jonah as living during the time of Jeroboam II (about 793-753 b.c.)
 4. 2 Kings 14:25; He restored the border of Israel from Lebo-hamath as far as the Sea of the Arabah, according to the word of the Lord, the God of Israel, which he spoke by his servant Jonah the son of Amittai, the prophet, who was from Gath-hepher.
 - F. Jesus is clearly referring to His resurrection as the "sign" for the Pharisees and Sadducees
 - G. Jesus' resurrection is the greatest miracle recorded because it broke the bonds of death and gave us the opportunity for everlasting life
- IV. How Do We Know?
- A. So the question, "Am I on the right path?" is a good one
 - B. But you don't answer this question by looking for signs around you, you answer it by looking in God's word
 - C. Not just "looking," but searching diligently
 1. Hebrews 11:6 (KJV 1900); But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him.
 2. Seek - to try to get, reach, or find something in a diligent or exact manner
 - D. 1 John 2:1-6; 1 My little children, I am writing these things to you so that you may not sin. But if anyone does sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous. 2 He is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only but also for the sins of the whole world. 3 And by this we know that we have come to know him, if we keep his commandments. 4 Whoever says "I know him" but does not keep his commandments is a liar, and the truth is not in him, 5 but whoever keeps his word, in him truly the love of God is perfected. By this we may know that we are in him: 6 whoever says he abides in him ought to walk in the same way in which he walked.
 - E. Ought - to owe a debt, to be obligated, bound by obligation
 - F. Once we know Him; once we know we are on the right path, we are obligated to follow that path
- V. Are We Seeking a Sign?
- A. We can know we are on the right path, we don't need some sign to be performed in front of our eyes to know we are doing what is right
 - B. Our "sign" is the written word of God given to us by a loving Father who wants us to be with Him

C. 2 Timothy 3:16–17; 16 All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, 17 that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work.